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OUTCOMES OF THE SECRETARIAT-WIDE CONSULTATION ON HOW TO RESPOND BETTER TO THE NEEDS OF PARTIES (2008–2012)

Note by the Executive Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Convention faces major challenges. Whilst progress is being achieved, biodiversity loss continues and the 2010 target may not be met at all levels. Implementation of the Convention's policy and guidance is not sufficient, due to capacity and resource constraints in many countries, as well as other challenges, such as the lack of political awareness and will, and the inherent difficulties associated with communicating the biodiversity agenda.

2. As part of the Executive Secretary's ongoing measures to improve the effectiveness of the operations of the Secretariat, the views of the staff regarding "the Secretariat I want, the CBD we want" were sought. This note presents those views brought to light through a fully participatory process which involved:

(a) An internal management review process undertaken by an open-ended task force of Secretariat staff between September 2006 and January 2008. This process gave opportunity for all staff to contribute their views through responding to pre-designed questionnaires, divisional and Secretariat wide meetings and consultations and an open-door policy for the submission of views;

(b) A staff retreat held at the Botanical Gardens, Montreal, on 9 November 2007. All staff was in attendance and spoke individually regarding "The Secretariat I want, the CBD we want". There was freedom of expression of views and the meeting achieved a high degree of consensus on the vision, functions, principles of operation of the Secretariat and means to achieve more effective outputs;

(c) A staff retreat held on 7 to 8 January 2008, in Montreal, with the participation of all staff to follow-up to the retreat of 9 November 2007, with the specific task to discuss "How to achieve the Secretariat we want"; and

* UNEP/CBD/COP/9/1.

(d) The “Management Review of the Secretariat to the CBD - Implementation Support to the Parties for Enhanced Implementation of the Convention” undertaken by an independent consultant.

3. The Convention faces major challenges. While implementation is primarily the prerogative of Parties, assisted by implementing agencies, the Secretariat plays a critical supporting and facilitating role. The challenges facing the Secretariat mirror those of the Convention itself. For example, it is not sufficiently connected with its major constituencies.

4. Staff members are highly motivated to support the Convention’s mission and are committed to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat in order to contribute to the enhanced implementation of the Convention. They are therefore identifying a strategy or “business plan” for the Secretariat 2008-2012. This paper, which builds on previous Secretariat discussions, is an input to this ongoing process.

5. In the staff vision for the Convention, biodiversity (and ecosystem services) is integrated into everyday decision-making. The Convention is making a clear difference, and those responsible for implementation of the Convention in countries have the means to do it.

6. To play an effective role in the enhanced phase of implementation, the Secretariat will need to become:

(a) More strategic in identifying issues and opportunities and packaging these into a coherent Secretariat-wide programme;

(b) More effective at closing the policy development/implementation loop, through enhanced feedback mechanisms;

(c) More responsive to the needs of national focal points;

(d) More aware of realities on the ground, including through increased dialogue with relevant planning, economic and development authorities as well as major groups;

(e) More connected with partners, including within the United Nations system, in order to leverage action; and

(f) More efficient at delivering Secretariat operations, including through strengthened knowledge management.

7. To support an enhanced phase of implementation, the Secretariat will need to increasingly focus on a number of areas:

(a) To promote dissemination of key messages among major groups, and to link these messages with key “live” issues;

(b) To analyse and synthesize lessons learned from national implementation (NBSAPs, national reports, etc) and provide such analyses and syntheses to the Conference of the Parties;

(c) To facilitate the use of tools and guidance developed under the Convention;

(d) To promote the exchange of experiences and relevant knowledge among Parties and partners in implementing the Convention;

(e) To facilitate provision of technical support from partner agencies, regional bodies, including through the UNDP country offices, etc; and

(f) To better support efforts of Parties and enhance communication with national focal points.

8. In terms of allocation of staff time and resources, this might imply:
- (a) The Executive Secretary to focus on strategic and high-level political and representational roles;
 - (b) Issue-based staff (currently in STTM and SEL) to further support implementation of programmes of work;
 - (c) Strengthened staff resources for programme implementation with effective support to national focal points, as well as for outreach and communication, including the website; and
 - (d) Better integration of support services, including conference services and information technology.
9. There is a need for closer day-to-day collaboration within and among divisions. Staff have clearly recognized that the existing organizational structure of the Secretariat is inconsistent with the requirements identified. Modes of operation need to eliminate divisional boundaries. A number of structural options are put forward. As important as modifications to the formal structure of the Secretariat *per se* is the further development of management processes and culture which enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of services delivered. To this end, programme delivery will be further strengthened through the increasing use of ad hoc Secretariat-wide task forces and other mechanisms for enhancing cooperation and coordination across existing divisional structures and hierarchies. In particular, horizontal working relations among staff members dealing with different aspects of the same issue will be reinforced.
10. Secretariat focal points should be established for CBD regions or subregions, for closer liaison with Parties and enhanced feedback on the state of implementation, success stories, and challenges encountered in these regions or subregions.
11. The Secretariat will lead by example, ensuring minimal impact on the environment, in particular biodiversity, through its activities. A Secretariat-wide Task Force on “greening” the office has been established and a number of measures have already been taken. Further efforts are needed in order to mainstream, systematize and bring in line with, and where possible exceed, United Nations best practice.
12. The Secretariat commits to operate as a modern knowledge-based organization and staff commit to ensuring that this is achieved and they give their maximum possible effort to ensuring that the objectives of the Convention and the requests of the Parties are met.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
I. Introduction.....	5
II. Mandate and existing role of the Secretariat.....	6
III. Strengths, achievements, and challenges of the Convention	6
A. Strengths and achievements	6
B. Challenges	6
IV. The role of the Secretariat in the enhanced phase of implementation	7
A. Envisioning the enhanced phase of implementation	8
B. Implications for the role of the Secretariat	9
C. Structural and other changes implied	11
V. Budget implications	14

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Decisions adopted at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) opened an “enhanced implementation phase” of the Convention. In adopting decision VIII/31 on the administration of the Convention and budget for the programme of work for the biennium 2007-2008, Parties mandated the Executive Secretary to adjust the structure of the Secretariat to the new implementation phase.¹ The internal auditors have also suggested that the Secretariat structure may need to be modified.²

2. As part of the Executive Secretary’s ongoing measures to improve the effectiveness of the operations of the Secretariat, a “management review” process has been undertaken, led by staff under the leadership of the Executive Secretary. This has involved:

(a) An internal management review process undertaken by an open-ended task force of Secretariat staff between September 2006 and January 2008. This process gave opportunity for all staff to contribute their views through responding to pre-designed questionnaires, divisional and Secretariat wide meetings and consultations and an open-door policy for the submission of views;

(b) A staff retreat held at the Botanical Gardens, Montreal, on 9 November 2007. All staff (at duty station) were in attendance and spoke individually regarding “The Secretariat I want, the CBD we want”. There was freedom of expression of views and the meeting achieved a high degree of consensus on the vision, functions, principles of operation of the Secretariat and means to achieve more effective outputs;

(c) A staff retreat held from 7 to 8 January 2008 in Montreal, at which all staff at the duty station were present, to follow-up to the retreat of 9 November 2007, with the specific task to discuss “How to achieve the Secretariat we want”; and

(d) The “Management Review of the Secretariat to the CBD - Implementation Support to the Parties for Enhanced Implementation of the Convention” undertaken by an independent consultant.

3. The full outcomes of this Secretariat led review process have been recorded in a comprehensive internal document, which will form the basis for follow up by the Secretariat and its senior management as a matter on ongoing internal review and improvement.

4. This note provides a summary of the outcomes of the processes identified above. It reviews the strengths and challenges of the Convention, examines the current functions of the Secretariat, envisages the enhanced phase of implementation, and proposes how the functions of the Secretariat could be adjusted to contribute more effectively to enhanced implementation while also meeting other challenges. The outcomes of this process are not definitive and the process is ongoing. The “business plan” for the Secretariat will be further developed based upon the outcomes of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

^{1/} Relevant documents include UNEP/CBD/COP/8/15 (Progress towards implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan: Follow-up to the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention) and UNEP/CBD/COP/8/28/Add1 (Proposed budget for the programme of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity for the biennium 2007-2008 (addendum: enhancing the Secretariat’s support to implementation of the Convention and achievement of the 2010 target).

^{2/} The OIOS Audit Report (May 2006) noted that “the current organizational structure dates back to the development phase of the Secretariat, which was primarily focused on servicing meetings. The Secretariat is now entering the implementation phase and OIOS is of the opinion that the current structure may not be capable of sustaining the current meeting schedule plus additional monitoring activities that will be required as part of the implementation phase”.

5. This note serves to inform the Conference of the Parties of considerations made by Secretariat staff in-line with their desire to be able to respond better to the requests of the Parties and contribute to the maximum possible extent to achieve the objectives of the Convention.

II. MANDATE AND EXISTING ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT

6. The functions of the Secretariat are set out in Article 24 of the Convention. These are: (a) to arrange for and service meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP) provided for in Article 23; (b) to perform the functions assigned to it by any protocol; (c) to prepare reports on the execution of its functions under the Convention and present them to the Conference of the Parties; (d) to coordinate with other relevant international bodies and, in particular to enter into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions; and (e) to perform such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties.

7. By including this last provision, the mandate of the Secretariat is broad and flexible. This provision further reinforces the need to proactively analyse the resource implications associated with specific requests of the Conference of the Parties.

8. To date, the Secretariat's functions have centred on arranging for and servicing meetings of the COP (Article 24 (a)), the MOP (Article 24 (b)) and subsidiary bodies of the Convention, on liaising with other organizations (Article 24d), and on implementing a wide range of other tasks as set out in elements to the various COP decisions (Article 24 (e)). These include convening expert groups and workshops, undertaking outreach activities, preparing reports and analyses, and disseminating tools and guidance for the implementation of the Convention. The current structure of the Secretariat reflects these tasks.

III. STRENGTHS, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND CHALLENGES OF THE CONVENTION

9. This section provides a brief overview of the strengths, achievements, and challenges of the Convention based on the recent reviews conducted for the first and second meetings of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention. It provides a context for the subsequent analysis of the role of the Secretariat.

A. *Strengths and achievements*

10. The Convention is recognized as the international environmental agreement covering all aspects of biodiversity.

11. The Convention has succeeded to bring together 190 Parties and relevant stakeholders to develop a comprehensive set of policies and guidelines. The Cartagena Protocol has been negotiated and is being operationalized. There is a committed constituency in support of the Convention and a highly motivated Secretariat with significant expertise and experience.

12. The Secretariat has built an impressive network of partners, locally and internationally, which increases its potential.

B. *Challenges*

13. The Convention faces major challenges. The concept and issue of "biodiversity" is not well understood. Biodiversity issues tend to have a low political profile. This is despite widespread interest in many components of biodiversity, including wildlife and landscapes.³

14. There is a big gap between the guidance developed under the Convention and the implementation on the ground. Most people familiar with the Convention (and other MEAs in general) are aware of this

^{3/} A review of recent writing on "biodiversity" issues in the press also reveals a tremendous interest in stories about the way that biodiversity contributes to ecosystem services, and the potential decline in these services as a result of biodiversity loss.

major challenge of the system. Even excellent guidance may not be applied by implementing agencies, donors or other decision-makers, all of which may undertake initiatives based on their own criteria and policies. And even if the guidance was fully endorsed by all stakeholders, other obstacles may prevent a full implementation, such as the lack of resources, other capacity or information.

15. The Convention's policy-making process suffers from poor feedback mechanisms. According to the text of the Convention, the overall aim of the Conference of the Parties is to keep under review the implementation of the Convention. Yet analyses of what works and what does not could be further strengthened.⁴ The Conference of the Parties faces a challenge to apply to its own operations the "adaptive management" it recommends to others.

16. There is a major lack of resources, capacity building and knowledge for implementation of the Convention. Beyond the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Convention has mobilized few additional resources. Few multilateral or bilateral agencies are providing capacity-building in support of the Convention, and frequently on a modest scale only. Each implementing agency has its own criteria and priorities, and biodiversity is rarely a top priority.

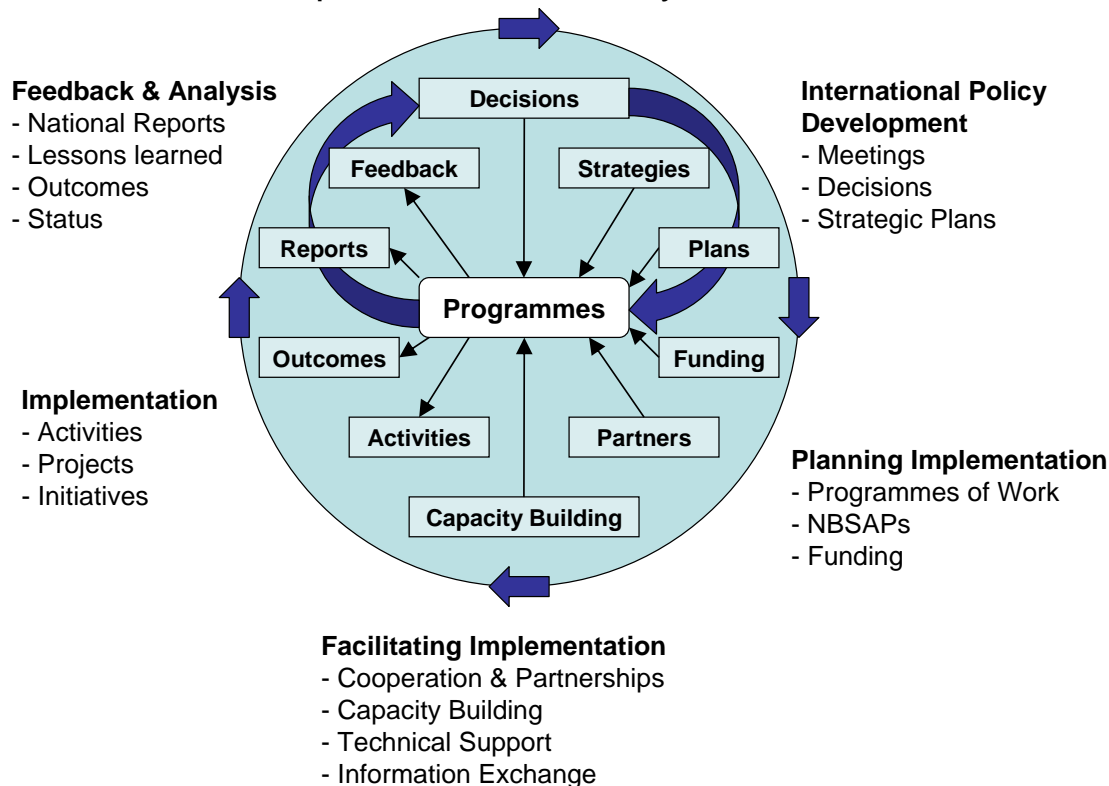
IV. THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT IN THE ENHANCED PHASE OF IMPLEMENTATION

17. Implementation is primarily the prerogative of Parties. In addition, many international organizations have a critical role and/or potential to assist in implementation. There is a consensus that the Secretariat should not become an implementing agency. At the same time it is widely agreed and understood that the Secretariat should do more to *facilitate* implementation. Before examining the future role of the Secretariat itself in facilitating implementation, it is worth considering what is meant by enhanced implementation to provide the context within which the specific role of the Secretariat itself in facilitating implementation can be elucidated.

18. In order to move from policy to implementation, the Secretariat needs to contribute to closing the loop which starts with international policy development, continues with facilitating the implementation of these international policies (by contributing to capacity-development, communication, education and public awareness, facilitating the exchange of information among Parties) and finally assisting Parties in reporting on implementation in order to ensure that lessons learned from implementation can in turn inform and contribute to the refinement and constant evolution of international policy development.

^{4/} As noted in the documentation prepared for the first meeting of WGRI "it is not clear that the Conference of the Parties has been effective in its overall purpose of keeping under review the implementation of the Convention. Consideration of the state of implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) or of the findings of national reports in meetings of the Conference of the Parties has been relatively limited. Thus, the potential contribution of the information in the reports to the assessment of the status and trends of biodiversity, to the review of implementation and effectiveness of the Convention, and to the development of guidance by the Conference of the Parties, has not been realized" (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/3, paragraph 18).

Implementation Life Cycle



A. *Envisioning the enhanced phase of implementation*

19. The Strategic Plan is due to be updated between COP-9 and COP-10, but for the purpose of this paper, it is assumed that the basic thrust will remain the same. The four goals and 19 objectives of the Strategic Plan set out the implementation challenge of the Convention.

20. Staff have identified the following vision for the Secretariat (which is consistent with the Strategic Plan):

- (a) Biodiversity (and ecosystem services) is integrated into everyday decision-making by actors on the ground;
- (b) The products of the Convention are making a difference; and
- (c) National teams responsible for the Convention have the means to implement it.

21. Practically speaking, prerequisites for achieving this vision and meeting the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan implies that every Party should:

- (a) Have an up-to-date NBSAP in place, by COP-10 and preferably by COP-9;
- (b) Prepare a fourth national report by the deadline of 30 March 2009;
- (c) Have a well developed national node of the clearing-house mechanism;
- (d) Have established all relevant focal points (including for ABS, CHM...), etc.;
- (e) Have access to relevant reference information, such as guidelines, strategies, reports, etc.;
- (f) Collaborate to share ideas and brainstorm on how to implement the Convention;
- (g) Plan and report on implementation activities; and

(h) Reach out to and involve many audiences, disseminate national information and share their experiences.

22. In order to be able to carry out the above tasks, every national focal point (and/or the other institutions responsible for national implementation) should:

- (i) Have the managerial and technical capacity to promote the implementation of the Convention;
- (ii) Be able to exchange experience and learn from peers;
- (iii) Be able to draw upon technical support from implementing agencies; and
- (iv) Have access to the necessary financial resources.

By empowering the national focal point, competent authorities at the national level will be in a better position to contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

23. At the level of the Convention it is necessary that the Conference of the Parties effectively keeps under review the implementation of the Convention. There is a need to fix the feedback loop referred to above and ensure that the international decision-making process is effectively informed by lessons from implementation on the ground.

24. There is also a need to ensure that the Convention stays abreast of topical issues and is able to respond to emerging issues.

25. In addition, a major outreach effort is needed to explain the importance of biodiversity for human well-being and economic development. This will require a concerted effort to engage the media and actors on the ground.

26. Finally, for the Convention's guidance to be considered in other relevant decision-making fora, including as relevant the areas of finance, economics and trade, it is necessary for all countries to be fully involved in the Convention, and to have full confidence with its decision-making processes.

B. Implications for the role of the Secretariat

27. The existing range of Secretariat functions is quite broad and already includes activities related to implementation, within the existing mandate. Nevertheless, the largest amount of time is devoted to preparing for and servicing intergovernmental meetings. The enhanced phase of implementation is likely to require emphasis in additional areas.

28. Although the Secretariat will continue to carry out its core mandate by organizing and servicing meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, the implementation phase would likely mean that the focus of the Secretariat would move further into *facilitating* the exchange of information among Parties and stakeholders, *promoting* the guidance and tools developed under the Convention process for implementation by Parties and partner agencies, and *providing technical support* to facilitate their implementation and consequently the implementation of the Convention. Awareness raising, capacity development, outreach and the establishment of closer relationships with partners and implementing agencies to follow developments in the field on CBD issues, would therefore be key elements of this new enhanced implementation phase.

29. The enhanced implementation phase could generally translate into more involvement in facilitating policy implementation, along the lines provided above, rather than further policy development. However, implementation would vary depending on the stages of development of various work programmes. While some areas are still largely at the stage of policy development (e.g. access and benefit-sharing), others are considered as having reached the implementation stage (e.g. tourism). Activities of the Secretariat could therefore be adapted to the needs of the respective programmes of work and continue to include a wide range of activities from policy development to technical support and the other activities mapped out above.

30. By implementing these activities the Secretariat could become a key facilitator in bridging the gap between international policy development and implementation activities.

31. To play an effective role in the enhanced phase of implementation, the Secretariat will need to become:

(a) More strategic by identifying issues and opportunities and packaging these into a coherent Secretariat-wide programme;

(b) More effective at closing the policy development/implementation loop, through enhanced feedback mechanisms;

(c) More responsive to the needs of national focal points;

(d) More aware of realities on the ground, including through increased dialogue with relevant planning, economic and development authorities as well as major groups;

(e) More connected with partners, including within the United Nations System, in order to leverage action; and

(f) More efficient at delivering Secretariat operations, including through strengthened knowledge management.

32. The implementation of the work programme related to one issue involves a number of professionals and support services. Hence, in order to bridge the gap between international policy development and implementation activities, horizontal working relations among staff members dealing with different aspects of the same issue will need to be reinforced in order to ensure complementarities, synergy, and quality. Ultimately, this would ensure that the Secretariat has contributed to all the steps leading from international policy development to implementation which include intermediate steps of capacity development, awareness raising, communication, outreach, exchange of information etc.

33. To support an enhanced phase of implementation, the Secretariat will need to increasingly focus on a number of areas to:

(a) Promote dissemination of key messages among major groups, and to link these messages with key “live” issues;

(b) Analyse and synthesize lessons learned from national implementation (national biodiversity strategies and action plans, NBSAPs, national reports, etc.) and provide such analyses and syntheses to the Conference of the Parties;

(c) Facilitate the use of tools and guidance developed under the Convention;

(d) Promote the exchange of experiences and relevant knowledge among Parties and partners in implementing the Convention. This exchange should cover both informal communication (online discussions as well as physical meetings), as well as easy access to well structured implementation data (on-line databases on implementation);

(e) Facilitate provision of technical support from partner agencies, including through the UNDP country offices, regional bodies etc; and

(f) Support efforts of Parties and communicate with national focal points.

34. Many of these activities imply a strengthening of the Clearing-House Mechanism. There is a wealth of reference information such as guidelines, strategies, reports, case-studies and tool-kits, which can help Parties implement the Convention, produced either by Parties themselves or by partner organizations (United Nations agencies, IGOs, NGOs, the private sector and academic institutions). It is the core function of the CHM to inventory, organize and classify this information, which is typically scattered across multiple locations and sources, and Parties do not necessarily know how to access it. The strategic long-term objective is to build an easy-to-access on-line knowledge base on the Convention and

its implementation. This knowledge base will grow incrementally, depending on resources made available.

35. Parties need to collaborate more on sharing ideas, exchanging expertise, brainstorming and seeking advice from each other on how to implement the Convention. Physical meetings will have to continue to play an important role. To some extent, online discussion fora, blogs and wikis can also connect national focal points, the Secretariat and other Convention stakeholders. These collaboration tools may have an important role to play in complementing other on-line services. Whatever the approach, communication needs to be improved and its effectiveness monitored.

36. National Information and Websites. The new version of the CBD website now contains a section dedicated to country profiles. Besides providing a snapshot of national activities to implement the Convention, these web pages are an entry point to NBSAPs, national reports and other country-level information. These pages will be further developed and linked with the network of national clearing-house mechanisms as well as the proposed on-line planning and reporting facility. In the longer term, it is envisaged that the country pages could be directly managed by national focal points.

37. Establishment of closer links with UNEP as host institution, implementing agencies, other partners and funding agencies in order to promote the implementation of the CBD and follow developments in the field in respective areas of work. In the context of One UN, the Secretariat could be mandated to prepare a coherent UN-wide biodiversity programme that would be shared by the Secretariat, the GEF, UNEP, UNDP and other United Nations bodies.

38. The Secretariat will need to further develop its outreach activities especially through leveraging the dissemination of key messages through partner organizations, media training etc.

39. The Secretariat will lead by example, ensuring minimal impact on the environment, in particular biodiversity, through its activities, in order to mainstream, systematize and bring in line with, or preferably exceed, United Nations best practice. A Secretariat wide Task Force on “greening” the office has been established, and a number of concrete steps have already been taken.

40. The Secretariat should be run like any modern well-managed knowledge-based organization. Whatever the activities assigned to the Secretariat:

- (a) it is the Secretariat's responsibility to carry them out as efficiently as possible, taking advantage of modern management and information tools;
- (b) it is the Parties' responsibility to provide the Secretariat with the resources that it needs as well as to provide clear and achievable guidance;
- (c) it is UNEP's and UNON's responsibility to provide the Secretariat with appropriate administrative and programme support to facilitate its operations.

C. Structural and other changes implied

41. The new implementation phase implies that the Secretariat will need to act more than ever as a single team. In addition to options for structural changes, mapped out below, this will depend very much on a shift in management processes and culture, characterized by a flexible, more horizontal approach to the organization of work.

42. While there is agreement that the Secretariat should act as a single team, a need for some internal divisional structure, although more flexible and more limited than now, is likely to remain. There was an almost unanimous view that staff should have more fluidity between technical expertise and functional roles, and that where feasible divisions should be amalgamated to break down unnecessary barriers. Work should be organized more along the lines of task teams and task forces comprising the necessary blend of expertise but focussing on functions and outcomes.

43. During its reflections on the Biosafety Unit, staff concluded that in principle the requirements for the Biosafety Protocol differed little from the CBD, except they are in different stages in their evolution and they have separate budgets. Certainly, in a structural/organizational/management sense, there are few grounds to separate the two and many benefits on offer through expanded cooperation and resource sharing. Transparency over budget costs would need to be maintained.

44. The Staff proposed a number of more specific optional changes to the divisional structure:

- (a) Separating the Information Technology function from the CHM and Website functions;
- (b) Placing the “operations” (RM, CS and IT functions) under a Deputy Executive Secretary;
- (c) The dissolution of STTM and SEL as separate entities and placing existing staff into more functional roles under operations or programmes was very clearly and almost unanimously identified as a key priority measure;
- (d) An expanded “Implementation Support Facility” comprising ITS and the engagement of major groups function, with staff moving progressively from the “scientific and legal affairs divisions” to this division as the respective programmes of work mature; and
- (e) A communications and outreach division (minus major groups).

45. Staff examined three aspects in particular:

(a) ***How to ensure better coordination between substantive programmes and ensure linkages between policy development and implementation?***

- (i) An option would be to create a comprehensive programme division, which would bring together the existing STTM, SEL divisions but also ITS, CEPA and Outreach and Major Groups;
- (ii) this structure could be headed by a “Director of Programmes”, who would ensure overall programme coordination, but would not be involved in individual supervision (alternatively, a “Deputy Executive Secretary” could undertake this function). Under such a configuration, line management would be ensured by Team Leaders/Heads of Units; and
- (iii) the Director of Programmes (or Deputy Executive Secretary) could be assisted by a Programme Team, composed of limited number of full-time staff and be assisted by other staff from the division, as needed.

(b) ***How to ensure that service units are better able to support the efficient delivery of Secretariat products and services?***

- (i) To complement Finance and Administration and Conference Services, a unit for Knowledge Management and Information Technology Support is needed;
- (ii) an Operations Division could be created to regroup these service functions;
- (iii) new functions such as Monitoring & Evaluation; Corporate Social Responsibility; Knowledge Management could also be part of the division; and
- (iv) such a division could be headed by a Chief Operating Officer (COO) who would be responsible, in particular, for developing Secretariat-wide continuous self-improvement systems and processes.

(c) ***How to streamline corporate communications?***

- (i) The Secretariat examined options for ensuring that corporate communication functions (e.g. press releases, annual reports, etc.) are not limiting the ability to deliver on the CEPA programme of work;

- (ii) the Secretariat also examined ways of ensuring consistency between corporate communications and the substantive programmes; and
- (iii) a possibility would be to nest corporate communications within the envisaged Programme and Implementation division whilst maintaining an appropriate link with OES.

46. Senior management functions need to be refocused to enable the Executive Secretary to concentrate on strategic and high level political and representational roles, including fund raising. To this effect, one or several senior positions could be re-oriented. The above options include the creation of (1) a Director of Programme & Implementation to ensure oversight, planning and delivery of a coherent and Secretariat wide Programme; (2) a Chief Operating Officer (COO) with a clear mandate to ensure the general efficiency of all Secretariat operations and the development of Secretariat-wide continuous improvement systems and processes; and/or (3) a Deputy Executive Secretary (DES) who would be tasked with day-to-day management, and would be able to run the office in the absence of the Executive Secretary.

47. Consideration needs to be given to the creation of a unit for Knowledge Management and Information Technology Support, in order to strengthen this function.

48. In addition, the Senior Management Committee should evaluate the need for reorganizing staff resources. More specific terms of reference for the Senior Management Committee need to be developed to focus its role on strategic planning issues, subordinating more day-to-day management to other management mechanisms.

49. A further cultural shift in management and practice is required to promote more a “matrix approach” in the organization of the Secretariat’s work. This would emphasize interdisciplinary team work, including responsibility and accountability to peers. More fluidity between technical expertise and functional role should be promoted. Task forces and task teams organized around selected themes, and other mechanisms that cut across divisions, are foreseen and already being implemented on a number of issues. In addition, other mechanisms, such as rotating staff among divisions, should be encouraged. A pre-requisite to this would be ascertaining staff expertise and career interests.

50. As an example of how a more horizontal approach could work in practice in the enhanced implementation phase, issue specialists (i.e., programme officers currently in STTM and SEL) would spend more time assisting Parties to promote implementation in each programme of work or cross-cutting issue. They would do this by, for example, promoting the use of CBD tools and guidance, identifying other tools, reviewing implementation, exchanging experiences among Parties and facilitating contributions of relevant organizations. This implies staff in the current STTM and SEL divisions will need to work more in cooperation with ITS and OMG staff. There is a need for increased attention to cross-cutting socio-economic issues and linking science and policy, which will also require even closer horizontal cooperation.

51. A strengthened Senior Management Committee would be central to this. It could play an important role in:

- (a) Assisting with strategic positioning of the Secretariat and its work;
- (b) Ensuring seamless coordination across divisions, including the creation of a Secretariat-wide system to create, manage, fund and monitor the implementation of programmes of work and activities with partners; and
- (c) Ensuring the overall supervision of new ways to work together such as task forces and task teams.

52. The Secretariat and the Conference of the Parties need a more complete understanding of the Convention’s state of implementation and the obstacles to implementation as a cornerstone to the enhanced implementation phase. There needs to be closer links between the Secretariat and national focal points to promote exchange of lessons learned, identify success stories, tools developed, obstacles to

implementation and need for capacity-building. Information gained needs to be integrated into the institutional memory of the Secretariat. As discussed above, this will require strengthening the Convention's information-based mechanisms, in particular the clearing-house mechanism, but also a concomitant strengthening of human resources.

53. No single person can analyse and be aware of the state of implementation in all 190 Parties. Therefore regional focal points should be established in the Secretariat to complement the existing issue-based capacity. The regional focal points would have an overview of the state of implementation and maintain more regular contact with focal points. This approach could be complemented by establishing CBD Liaison Teams in different UN locations, including New York, Geneva, and Nairobi and within UNDP country offices.⁵

V. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

54. The Staff has not investigated the budget implications of its review in detail. However, the review has made some general observations on implications for the budget noting the following in particular:

(a) At present, the majority of the "core" budget (in fact greater than 99%) is expended on arranging and servicing mandatory meetings;

(b) Staff are highly motivated, qualified and experienced, and work well together as a multi-disciplinary team, and can achieve much more, but financial resource availability remains a considerable constraint to doing so;

(c) There is the opportunity to capitalize on this situation through increasing the availability of financial resources and doing so is considered to be highly cost-effective in terms of its impacts on achieving the objectives of the Convention;

(d) The capacity of, and that available to, the Secretariat is considerable and includes that of its many partners, but the ability to work effectively with partners continues to be constrained through lack of financial resources available to staff to ensure full and effective engagement;

(e) Voluntary financial contributions are often made available on an *ad-hoc* basis and often respond to selective short-term needs. A longer-term strategy for resource mobilization is being developed by the Secretariat. One need is to identify more programme based budget support opportunities whereby donors can make longer-term commitments, which include clear goals, outputs and identifiable investment outcomes. Examples might be long-term programmes for support to the CHM, CEPA or national capacity-building, etc.;

(f) Expanded use should be made of (i) secondments of staff from partner organizations to the Secretariat; (ii) the assignment of staff in partner organizations to more focussed and effective CBD related functions; and (iii) the short-term Secretariat staff assignment to partner organizations;

(g) There are clearly justifiable needs for additional resources in particular to:

(i) increase efforts to engage with major groups;

(ii) improve the effectiveness of the Clearing-House Mechanism;

^{5/} ToRs would include: (1) Support to NFPs; (2) Liaison with the Secretariat regarding NBSAP implementation and reporting; (3) Integration of NBSAP in PRSPs and other national frameworks; (4) Support the national CHM; (5) Participation to the compilation of national information, especially about national biodiversity-related activities; (6) Facilitate the exchange of information/experiences between the Secretariat and the country.

- (iii) increase the presence of the Secretariat in major United Nations headquarters, including Geneva;
- (iv) improve liaison with business;
- (v) increase technical capacity to respond to the needs to expedite an international regime on access and benefit sharing;
- (vi) enhance support to the Convention's work with the UNFCCC;
- (vii) improve support to conference services; and
- (viii) significantly improve the ability of the Secretariat to support capacity-building, particularly among developing countries, including liaison with partners regarding joint capacity-building activities across all programme areas.

55. Further details of many of these needs are contained in the proposed budget for the programme of work of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol for the biennium 2009-2010 (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/27).
